

Becoming a Certified Planner: What is AICP and Why It Can Benefit You

Blake Roberts, Ph.D., AICP

Senior Environmental Planner, Delta Protection Commission

Director of Professional Development
Sacramento Valley Section, American Planning Association



The Allure of Planning



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DayjracBf8>



American Planning Association

- Accreditation, certification, professional standards, and certification maintenance
- Conferences and education
- Education for policy makers, media, and the public
- Planning partnerships
- Policy advocacy
- Research
- Publications



Benefits of Membership

- Keep up with the profession
- Improve and expand your skills
- Connect with experts
- Expand your network
- Make a difference locally, statewide, and nationally



Benefits of Membership

- Subscriptions to *Planning, Interact*, and Planning Advisory Service
- Discounted subscriptions for *JAPA* and *Zoning Practice*
- Discounts at APA bookstore
- Eligibility and support resources for AICP exam
- Discount on National Planning Conference registration
- Group rates on insurance



Benefits of Membership

- Enhanced access to APA California website
- Subscription to *CalPlanner*
- Discounted fees on APA events and Certification Maintenance (CM) credit opportunities
- Eligibility for scholarships
- California Planning Foundation membership
- Discount on APA California Conference registration



APA

SAN DIEGO

CALIFORNIA
CONFERENCE

OCT 7-10

2018

SHAPING OUR FUTURE

Planning
Places
for All



Benefits of Membership

- Discounts on SVS APA events and credit opportunities
- Eligibility for scholarships
- Access to local AICP preparation courses and study materials
- Professional development opportunities
 - *Leadership Seminar*
 - *Planning + Leadership + Advancement + Networking (PLAN)*
 - *Young Planners Group (YPG)*



American Institute Of Certified Planners

- APA's professional institute
- To be AICP, a planner must:
 - *meet requirements for education and experience,*
 - *pass the AICP exam,*
 - *pledge to uphold ethical standards (AICP Code of Ethics), and*
 - *engage in ongoing professional development (Certification Maintenance)*



Benefits

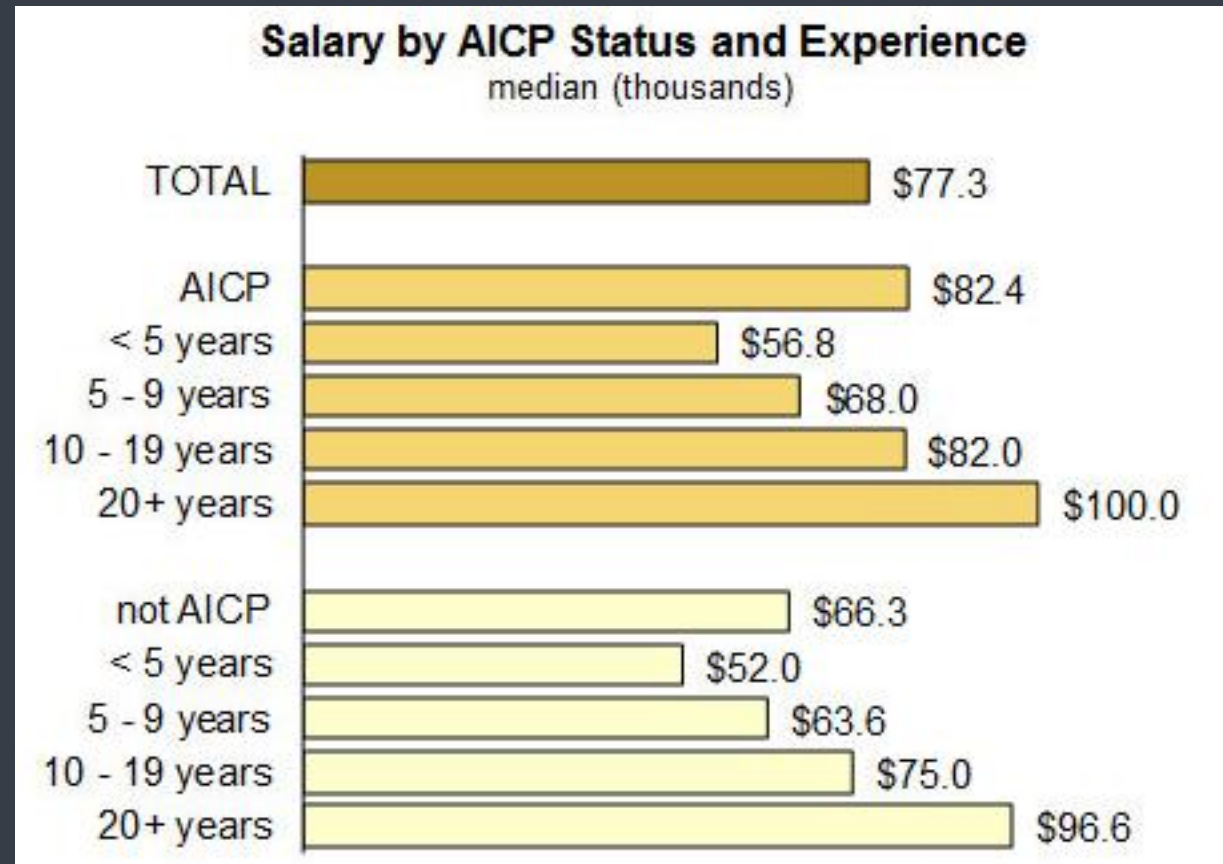
- Demonstrates level of advanced competence
- Demonstrates commitment to excellence and ethical standards
- Places value on staying current in planning field
- Recognized experience and education
- Useful for marketing
- Marks personal achievement



Benefits

- Higher compensation (2016 survey)

Median salaries \$16,100 more than non-AICP members



Traditional Pathway to AICP



get
educated



gain
experience



apply for the
AICP exam



study for and
pass the exam

AICP

become an
AICP member



Eligibility

- Current APA member
- Completion of education and professional planning experience

Level of Education	Total Number of Years of Professional Planning Experience Required
Graduate degree in Planning from a program accredited by the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB)	2
Bachelor's degree in Planning from a program accredited by the PAB	3
Graduate degree in Planning from a program not accredited by the PAB	3
Any other post-graduate, graduate, or undergraduate degree	4
No college degree	8



Professional Planning Experience

- Apply a planning process appropriate to the situation
- Employ an appropriately comprehensive point of view
- Involve a professional level of responsibility and resourcefulness
- Influence public decision making in the public interest



Application Process

- Submit online application
- Upload verification documents for degrees and employment you are claiming as professional planning experience
- Submit exam application criteria responses
- Pay application/exam fees of \$495 (APA California and Sacramento Valley Section have scholarships)

November 2018 AICP Exam Schedule

Application Window Opens	June 1, 2018
Early Bird Deadline	June 7, 2018
Final Application Deadline	June 28, 2017
Testing Window	November 5-19, 2018



Application Process

- Benefits of Early Bird submittal
 - *Early notification of application status*
 - *If denied, opportunity to revise and resubmit application in same exam window*



Subject Matter

- Fundamental Planning Knowledge – 25%
- Plan Making and Implementation – 30%
- Areas of Practice – 30%
- Leadership, Administration and Management – 5%
- Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct – 10%



Nature of Exam Questions

- More breadth than depth
- Situational questions
- Emphasis on public agency management:
 - *Planner's roles vs. elected officials*
 - *Application of technical knowledge*
 - *Analysis of alternatives*
 - *Ethics*
 - *Public interest*
 - *Public involvement in decision-making*



Computer Based Exam

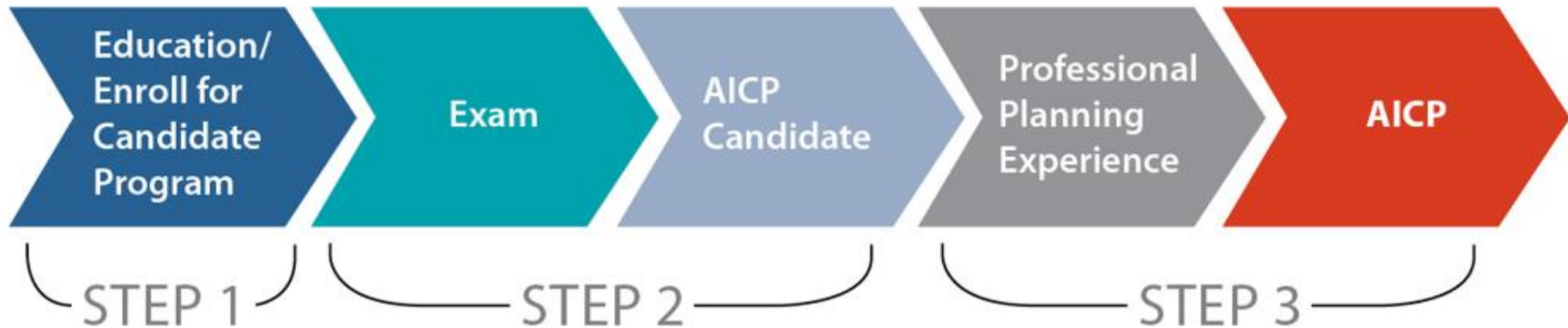
- Brief tutorial, 3 ½ hours for exam
- 170 multiple choice questions, including 20 sample questions
- Pool of 900 questions
- You will receive score before leaving testing center
- Pass rate is approximately 65%

AICP Candidate Pilot Program

Traditional Sequence



AICP Candidate Pilot Program Sequence





AICP Candidate Pilot Program

Students and graduates of PAB accredited programs can:

- Enroll in the program at any time
- Register for exam in December or June after you graduate
- Use the payment program for exam fees
- Take the exam prior to earning professional planning experience



Certification Maintenance

- Members must earn 32 CM credits over two-year reporting period, including:
 - *1.5 credits of ethics*
 - *1.5 credits of law*
- Members can carry over maximum of 16 credits to next reporting period



Certification Maintenance

- Ways to earn CM credits
 - *Attending approved activity*
 - *Speaking/instructing at approved activity*
 - *Self-reporting for non-approved activity*
 - *Authoring article*



American Planning Association
planning.org



**American Planning Association
California Chapter**
apacalifornia.org



**American Planning Association
Sacramento Valley Section**
svsapa.org

Blake Roberts, Ph.D., AICP

Director of Professional Development
Sacramento Valley Section,
American Planning Association

blake.roberts@delta.ca.gov



American Planning Association
California Chapter
Sacramento Valley

Making Great Communities Happen